

Friends

I woke up this morning to a mixed sense of curiosity and concern. What is Donald Trump doing now? What are the latest executive orders? Can he really pardon all those people involved in the Capitol Hill riots? In four years' time, will he have somehow enacted a law that allows him to govern for even longer? What effect will any of this have on the rest of the world? What about climate change and the World Health Organisation?

However, I cannot possibly continue to get on with life with one eye on Donald Trump, and anyway, I have no control over what he says and does. As I gave myself a strong talking to this evening along those lines, I suddenly realised that if I had been scouring my Bible every couple of hours as avidly as I had been scouring the news for the next bit of information to come out of the White House, it would have been much more to the point.

Karl Barth said, "Take your Bible and take your newspaper and read both. But interpret newspapers from your Bible."

American politics is not our hill to climb. However, we can note that Leviticus 19:33-34 says "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God." As we read, we may re-confirm our own commitment to welcoming the asylum-seeker, the refugee, the migrant worker. We can note the many, many verses on healing in the Bible and do everything that we can to ensure that healthcare remains accessible to all who need it, both in this country, and internationally. We can read Amos 5:24 "But let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like a never-failing stream" and vow to make it mean something, at least in our own lives.

It is not our job to critique the politics of another nation, but discernment is considered to be a spiritual gift, and we should exercise it. Carefully checking the ideas we are hearing on the news against our Bibles, our reason, our tradition and experience, we can ensure that we will know the things that we would not want to let go of in our own political discourse.

God bless, Vicci